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ABSTRACT

Among the range of resources in the Mid-West Region of Ireland, higher education is an important, if costly, element. Five university institutions, eight colleges of education, two colleges of technology, and since 1970 nine regional technical colleges offer a higher education. The very large second level student body of the Limerick region was denied access to higher education, unless they travelled outside the region to Cork or Galway, between which Limerick is geographically situated. Since a case for a university at Limerick was rejected in 1967, the Higher Education Authority in 1968 recommended the establishment of an institution of higher education providing technological education at various award levels. Therefore in 1970, the National Institute for Higher Education (NIHE) was founded, having both a national and a regional function. This study examines the Mid-West region (demography, physiography, economy, education) and the NIHE, and evaluates some of their salient features. Some aspects of the present interaction between them are described and an extended pattern of constructive interaction is advocated and analysed. In this analysis the education system is seen as a component part of the socioeconomic fabric of the region; its quality and quantity will not determine autonomously the fate of the region. Also given is some statistical data on the total and rural population, employment, and enrollment in the post primary schools and in NIHE. (Author/NQ)

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EDUCATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AN IRISH CASE - STUDY.

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EUROPEAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

THE MID - WEST REGION OF IRELAND.

A CASE STUDY

BY

SÉAMUS P. Ó'BUACHALLA

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

A REPORT FOR THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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FOREWARD

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

This study is concerned with higher education in the Mid-West Region of Ireland and the contributory role of higher education institutions, especially the National Institute for Higher Education at Limerick, in regional development.

The relative geographical location of the study region is shown in Map.1. The region includes the counties of Clare and Limerick and part of Tipperary (the North Riding). The Mid-West region is one of the nine regions designated under the 1963 Planning and Development Act: these regions are also the administrative units for health and tourism. While the county remains the administrative unit of local government, the component counties in a region collaborate in joint socio-economic planning and industrial development.

Each county has a Development Team representative of the agencies concerned with various aspects of development, in each region development is coordinated by a regional Development Organisation on which the component county teams are represented. At national level the county and regional teams are represented on central committees which are situated in government ministries.

Industrial development on a national scale is the special responsibility of the Industrial Development Authority, a state-sponsored body, with specific involvement in regional policy. In the Mid-West region this industrial development function is discharged on behalf of the IDA by the statutory body responsible for Shannon International Airport, SFADCO. The twin objectives of SFADCO are to promote the overall development of the Shannon complex and to foster

industrial expansion in the Mid-West.

Higher education in the state is available in five university institutions, eight colleges of education, two colleges of technology and since 1970 at nine regional technical colleges. The rapid increase in participation at second level in the sixties catalysed an increased demand for higher education; the Limerick region which had no higher education institution of university standing, campaigned vigorously for a university throughout the sixties. Its very large second level student body was denied access to higher education, unless they travelled outside the region to Cork or Galway, between which Limerick is geographically situated. A commission on Higher Education in 1967, rejected the case for a university at Limerick; the Higher Education Authority in 1968 recommended the establishment at Limerick of an institution of higher education providing technological education at various award levels. According to this specification, the National Institute for Higher Education was founded in 1970, having both a national and a regional function. It opened to its first students in 1972 and its first degree programme cohort graduated in 1976.

The NIHE is located at Limerick on a riverside campus which it shares with the recently constituted Thomond College of Education. The close proximity of the two institutions was intended to facilitate their eventual development as an integrated autonomous institution.

Another institution similar to the Limerick NIHE is planned for Dublin. When that institution is created, the provision for higher education in the state will be as indicated on Map.2.

This study is not directly concerned with the question of the link between education and economic development, nor with the nature of the mechanism involved in any such link. The study region and an institute of higher education are examined; some of their salient features are evaluated. Some aspects of the present interaction between them are described and an extended pattern of constructive interaction is advocated and analysed. In this analysis the education system is seen as a component part of the socio-economic fabric of the region; its quality and quantity will not determine autonomously the fate of the region. Among the range of resources in the region, however, higher education is an important, if costly, element.

2.0 THE REGION.

The Mid-West region, in its physiography and socio-economic features, forms part of the larger peripheral region which stretches along the entire Atlantic coast of Ireland; while it exhibits some of the common general characteristics of the western peripheral region, the Mid-West enjoys some counterbalancing advantageous features. Its capital city, Limerick (pop. 58×10^3) is the largest urban settlement on the western seaboard and with its adjoining satellite towns has achieved a moderate rate of industrial growth. Furthermore its location at the head of the Shannon estuary and its rich agricultural hinterland, confer significant advantages on the Mid-West.

2.1 Physiography.

The region consists of a number of distinct landforms as follows;

i) the esturary of the river Shannon, 60 miles long, offering deep-water facilities and potential industrial sites,

ii) the limestone karst plateau of Clare, north of the estuary and the littoral fringe of this plateau on which most of the Clare towns are located,

iii) the fertile plain of Limerick, stretching eastwards from the city on which over 85% of the land is agriculturally productive,

iv) the town of Ennis and Shannon and Limerick City which together constitute the urban and industrial core of the region.

The southern boundaries of the region are defined by the mountains of Kerry and North Cork and the northern by the Slieve Aughty mountains; Lough Derg and the Silvermines Mountains mark the north and northwestern regional boundary. The lower reaches of the Shannon river and Lough Derg constitute a physical amenity on which significant tourist and leisure developments are located. Climatically, the Mid-West region benefits from the influence of the North Atlantic Gulf Stream; the mean temperature ranges from 2°C in January/February to 19°C in July/August. Rainfall varies from 52 mm to 117 mm per month. The prevailing winds are westerly.

2.2 Demography.

While the national population has in the sixties shown a reversalof the continuous decline of the past century, for many of the regions in Ireland, population decline is still a major problem. During the sixties total population, with an average annual growth rate of 0.41% rose to 2,944 x 10^3 in 1970[5]. Whereas the Eastern region which includes the capital, has experienced a rapid population growth, all the other regions experienced a decline in the fifties and half of them a further decline in the sixties.

The population of the Mid-West region is shown in Table 2.21 by county for each of the years 1961, 1966 and 1971.

During the period 1961/71, the region has shown a steady increase in population, most of which has been located in the regional capital or in the adjacent towns. The net increases for each of the counties conceal a pattern of steady decline in the population of most of the rural districts; in Co. Clare a 29% increase in the population of the urban area of Ennis, part of the Shannon-Ennis-Limerick core, is neutralised by a decline in all but one of the rural districts. The urban/rural distrbution of population shows a pattern of increasing urbanisation in the region; in 1971 just under 40% of the region's population was urban-based as is shown in Table 2.22.

The urban population is distributed in units which range in size from Limerick city (pop.58 x 10^3) through county towns, to the lower limit of town size, i.e. settlements of 50 occupied dwellings or 200 inhabitants. Town size for the region and the counties is shown in Tables 2.23 and 2.24; most of the towns are

under 1,000 population and more than half of these are located in Co. Limerick.

The main towns of the region and its transportation network are shown in Map 3.

Due to rural depopulation and an increasing urbanisation rate the population concentration on a national basis in recent years has weakened considerably; disregarding the eastern region which has a high density of 152 per sq. km., the other regions display a homogeneous low level of concentration. None of the western regions approaches the national density of population of 43 per sq. km; the relevant figure for the Mid-West is 34.

The internal structure of the population of the Mid-West expressed in sex-age terms, shows the eroded pyramid shape characteristic of the national demographic structure and the consequent high dependency ratio. Heavy emigration in the recent past has severely eroded the age groups in the range 20-39 years. Recent studies indicate that, assuming zero migration, the age-structure of the population will not approach normality within twenty years. The percentage of the population of the region which is dependent (under 14 and over 65) at 42.7% is only marginally greater than the national average of 42.3%.

Recent demographic studies involving assumptions of net immigration contain forecasts of overall regional increases of 25% and 38% by 1986 and 1991 respectively. These projections indicate an increase in regional urban population of the order of 90% by 1991 and a 7% decrease in rural population. This urban increase is located

mainly in the Limerick-Shannon-Ennis zone, with which 60% of the overall predicted increase is associated. Districts on both banks of the Shannon Estuary which have suffered recent population decreases are allocated enhanced populations deriving from the planned accelerated inudstrialisation of the estuary region.

2.3 Economy of the Region.

The economy of the region is characterised by a general acceleration in the decline of the primary sector accompanied by a localised rapid increase in the secondary and tertiary sectors. This latter feature is related directly to the national policy on regionalisation whereby the Limerick-Shannon-Ennis zone has been designated as one of the three centres for major industrial development. The sectoral distribution of employment in the region is shown in Table 2.31 for 1961 and 1971; in this period a distinct shift as between the sectors has taken place.

The reduction of employment in the primary sector is of major significance in the region because of the relative importance of this sector to the economy and of its historical dominant role.

The distribution of employment in each of the counties is shown in Table 2.32 for 1961 and 1971.

In all the counties of the region the outflow from agriculture is accompanied by the emergence of "part-time" farmers who hold a supplementary occupation usually in the secondary sector; in the 1971 census only 64% of the region's landowners reported farming as their principal occupation while in Co. Clare this figure

was as low as 51%. While the percentage sectoral balance in employment in the region has not approached the national position, of 26:30:44, it is nearest to it in the secondary sector. The shift in relative importance of agriculture is also reflected in the more rapid decline in farm population than in rural population; in the period 1961-1971 the farm population of the region declined by 23% while the rural population declined by 6% in the same period. Farm size is a critical factor in the region's primary sector economy; in 1971 58% of farm holdings were under 50 acres, and 35% under 30 acres. In economic terms the quality of the holdings is of greater significance than the total acreage. Since 1974, farmers with holdings of more than £100 valuation, are liable for income tax; as indicated in Table 2.33, less than 5% of the region's farmers had holdings of valuation of £100 + and while it reached 6.9% in Co. Limerick, a mere 1.9% of Clare farmers were in this category.

In relation to regional economic indicators, there is a major deficiency of comparative statistics on standards of living and gross regional product. Data on personal income by region are available which show for 1969 a ratio of 1.6 between the region with the highest and the lowest income per head. This data shows that

1) in the Dublin Region (East) personal income is 20% above the national average.
2) the Mid-West, South-West, North-East and South-East regions lag behind the national average by from 1% to 7%.
3) the Midlands, North West and West regions are from 21% to 25% lower than the national average.

Historically, industrial employment in the region has been concentrated mainly in the food-related and the light engineering categories. The past two decades have produced an extension of the range of industrial activity. The expansion of the past two decades, actively promoted by the Industrial Development Authority and its local agency, SFADCO, has sought to counteract rationalisation and the decline of traditional industries by a strategy of positive discrimination in favour of the regions whose economies were largely dependent on agriculture. The location policy involved in this strategy aimed at encouraging industries by various measures to locate outside the Eastern metropolitan region. These measures include differential financial incentives, industrial site preparation and provision, advance factory provision, technical training facilities and advisory and promotional services. These industrial development policies have produced a diversification and dispersal of industry in the Mid-West region in which small and medium sized firms have predominated. This location and size policy is intended to ensure employment for the dispersed labour pool and also to absorb the manpower leaving agriculture. In selecting the type of industry for the region, preference is given to those with a high male labour content especially in the high skill category.

The regional industrial plan for the period 1973-77 allocated a target of a 21% increase in jobs in manufacturing industry in the Mid-West; this would involve the creation of 3,800 net extra jobs which, allowing for 1,600 expected redunduncies, indicates a required gross total of 5,400 new jobs over the period. A very high redundancy rate and the overall impact of the current economic recession have impeded industrial growth to such an extent that the net increase in industrial employment over the past five years is significantly off

target. Unemployment in the region has risen rapidly in all three counties as is indicated in Table 2.34.

The internal structure of the industrial employment sector shows a strong quantitative dependence on a small range of industries as is indicated in Table 2.35. Engineering accounts for over one third of the region's industrial employment and the Food and Drink category employs one quarter. The textile industry employing 11% of those industrially employed, has been particularly susceptible to recession pressures.

The planned development of the Shannon Estuary as a main location for maritime industry is expected to have a significant catalytic effect on the entire economy of the Mid-West region. The development of the deep water port facilities and the establishment of industries engaged in the processing of primary raw materials, should significantly modify a region whose economy has heretofore been based upon agriculture. Present plans involve oil refining, petrochemicals, aluminium smelting and an integrated steel works as the industries to be distributed among the industrial locations on both sides of the 60 mile estuary. This estuarial development is expected to create a net total of 10,500 jobs.

In general terms, the region is attempting within a national policy of full employment and balanced regional development to build up a viable industrial sector and the associated infrastructal facilities. This industrialisation policy is aimed at absorbing the

labour drop-out from agriculture and the projected population increase which will be predominantly urban-based. Industrial training and retraining figure prominently in this strategy; in the Mid-West region there are two ANCO centres providing this training.

2.4 Education in the Region.

There is no regional authority for education. Education at first level is available at parish or locality level within the region and at second level, both secondary (grammar) schools and vocational schools are located in most of the towns of the region. Only the vocational system is organised on a local public basis with a county structure, the secondary and the elementary schools are denominationally organised without any regional or county organisational structure. Full-time education is compulsory to 15 years of age. Education is free to the end of second level.

Third level education is provided at a number of centres in the region which have a natural centre of gravity in the emerging complex at Limerick which includes

i) the National Institute for Higher Education

ii) the National College of Physical Education

iii) the Thomond College of Education for Teachers of Technical Subjects.

Limerick also possesses a large College of Education for elementary teachers, (Mary Immaculate College of Education), and a Senior Technical College. On the perimeter of the region, at Tralee, a new Regional Technical College is developing which will cater for some of the educational demand in the western end of the region. Apprentice education and technical retraining is provided in a number of centres in the region by the vocational education authorities of each county and by ANCO - the national industrial training authority.

At second level the region is served by an extensive network of schools, both secondary grammar and secondary vocational. The pedagogic and social considerations which have maintained the divide between these two forms of post primary education have been set aside in the establishment in recent years of comprehensive and community schools whose aim is to cater within a community context for a wider bandof abilities and aptitudes than either of the existing school types. The number of schools of different types by county is indicated in Table 2.41. While over 90% of vocational schools are coeducational, less than one third of secondary grammar schools cater for boys and girls. The distribution of enrolments in each type of school, by sex for each county is shown in Table 2.42. Over eighty per cent of the students attend secondary schools; fifteen per cent attend vocational schools. The degree of dispersion of population and other factors in the region are reflected in the wide variation in school size. Thus as indicated in Table 2.42 many of the schools in the region are small, except those in the Limerick city area and in the larger towns. Seventy two per cent of the schools in counties Limerick and Clare are under 300 in enrolment and 25% of the schools in these counties have enrolments under 150.

Size of postprimary school is a very significant factor in determining the curricular range and the degree of individual opportunity available. Furthermore, in the context of regional development, size constraints and facility availability will tend to exclude from the curriculum those subjects and skills which are most likely to contribute to the socio-economic development of the region. Small postprimary schools, especially secondary grammar schools, will of necessity confine their curriculum to academic subjects, an educational feature which will invariably promote out-migration by students in search of first employment.

The effect of size of school on curricular opportunity may be seen in relation to the provision at Leaving Certificate level of such subjects as Honours Mathematics, Science and Technical subjects generally; the provision of Modern Languages is also correlated with size of school. Table 2.45 indicates the low level of provision of these subjects in the post-primary schools of Counties Clare and Limerick.

The provision of third level education in the region is summarised in Table 2.46, which indicates the level of courses offered and the related award.

The Colleges of Education have a national rather than a specific regional function in that they educate teachers for specific levels or subject areas. The N.I.H.E. was founded to provide higher education in the Mid-West region and the play a critical role in the interaction between regional development and higher technical education; thus the N.I.H.E. has a much more pronounced regional identity than the other Limerick colleges.

The N.I.H.E. for purposes of certification and validation is linked with University College, Galway, while M.I.C.E. and T.C.E. are linked with University College, Cork.

Apprentice education and industrial retraining in the region is provided by ANCO at two centres at Limerick and Shannon, and by four mobile units. ANCO employs a staff of 115 in the region and in 1976 its budget reached £1.5 million. Its through-put annual capacity in apprentice and retraining courses averages 1,200, providing a wide variety of courses in the engineering, electrical and construction industries.

3.0 HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE REGION.

3.1 The National Institute for Higher Education at Limerick.

The NIHE was established in 1970 following various studies of the higher education needs of the region and of the demands at national level for technologists and applied scientists. Its regional and national character are explicitly expressed in its educational objectives which define the institution's role as providing higher education locally for the region, complementing existing institutions and offering specialisations which may not be found elsewhere in the country's third level institutions.

In fulfilling its regional and national roles, the Institute places a special emphasis on applied knowledge and seeks to have a special concern for the technological needs of industry, agriculture, commerce and public administration and the professions. The NIHE was designed to respond by a flexible use of resources and facilities to the educational,social and environmental demands of its immediate region.

In structuring its educational programmes, NIHE seeks to widen the avenue of access to third level studies and to promote ease of transferability between different institutions and between award levels. In many of its organisational details, as in its fundamental objective, it offers a different form of higher education to that available in the traditional university institutions.

Admission procedures allow for the recognition of a wider range of second-level experience than was customary heretofore: hence all subjects of the Leaving Certificate are recognised for minimum admission purposes. Programmes of study are based upon a module and credit system which has promoted innovation in instructional procedures and facilitated a personalised continuous assessment of student performance. In an institution devoted to technology, a desirable balance was introduced by interdisciplinary programmes which offered programmes of study drawn from the sciences, engineering, economics and the social sciences; this interdisciplinary arrangement allowed for greater provision in meeting individual needs and aptitudes. In order to extend the use of campus facilities, a system of four working terms per annum is employed which permits of a higher annual student intake. Perhaps the most radical departure from traditional university procedure entailed the introduction of periods of off-campus work experience as an integral part of the academic programme. This Cooperative Education Programme exposes the student to the world of reality and offers him an early experience of a variety of career possibilities. The scheme also forges a mutually valuable link between the NIHE and the industrial, professional and administrative agencies employing the student.

The planning and development of the NIHE since 1969, occurred within a national policy framework which lacked the determinant support and consistency of establishing legislation. In a period of very rapid expansion of higher education and of the emergence of new institutions, the precise specification of exact structural links

between institutions was essential; its absence has created policy vacillations, promoted institutional imperialism, ambiguity as to autonomy and widespread institutional dissatisfaction in the technical sector of higher education. The NIHE has suffered in this regard especially in relation to the awarding of its degrees and diplomas. While the eventual emergence of a multi-college University of Limerick is envisaged, the designated present status of the NIHE is that of a Recognised College of University College, Galway, which institution will award its degrees.

When the NIHE opened in 1972 it offered its first students programmes of study at degree (4 year) and diploma (3 year) level in the following fields:

1. Administrative Systems.
2. Business Studies.
3. Electronics.
4. European Studies.
5. Materials and Industrial Engineering.

Table 3.11 shows the growth in student numbers from 1972-1976, and their distribution over the five programmes of study.

In each of the programmes a steady increase in enrolment has taken place at both degree and diploma level. Business Studies has shown a more rapid growth rate than any of the other programmes. The growth of faculty and other staff is shown in Table 3.12.

In view of the regional and national functions of NIHE the geographical origin of enrolling students is of interest.

Table 3.13 shows the geographical origin of those students who enrolled in Year 1 in 1975/76.

The type of second level school attended by enrolling students is of significance in view of the polarity inherent in the binary structure of second level schools. The education background (school attended) of Year 1 entrants 1975/76 reveals a very strong representation of students who had attended secondary grammar schools; their distribution over the various disciplines and programme areas indicates a strong preference by students from both secondary and vocational schools for Business Studies and Electronics, with a depressed enrolment in European Studies. The data in Table 3.14 shows a slight advantage attaching to those attending secondary school in gaining admission; whereas the ratio of secondary to vocational students in the region in 1974/75 is approximately 5:1 (c.f. Table 2.43) the corresponding ratio among the new entrants to NIHE 1975/76 approaches 7:1 (c.f. Table 3.14) A more reliable interpretation of those figures would require detailed information on the composition of senior cycle cohorts at national and regional levels.

The phased development of the NIHE is planned to reach a student enrolment figure of 1,100 by the late seventies and a gross campus enrolment of 8,000 by the end of the century - including the associated Colleges of Education. The College of Physical Education and the newly established College of Education for Technical Subjects have been amalgamated to form Thomond College of Education with a stablised projected annual enrolment of 800.

3.2 Present Patterns of Interaction.

The NIHE from its establishment has been accepted in the region as a major institution, which while, offering long-awaited higher education, would play a leading role in the development and economic expansion of the region. The Institution for its part has from its foundation been conscious of its regional identity and has sought various means of giving practical expression to its objectives of contributing to the development of the Mid-West region. This mutual interaction of region and institute has produced even within five years, some very promising measures on which more extensive long-term links can be elaborated.

1. NIHE has developed close contact with the schools in the region, with a view to generating among senior students informed positive attitudes towards the educational opportunities available at Limerick. The success of these contacts is evidences in the numbers entering NIHE from the secondary and vocational schools of the region; the instutute is increasingly regarded as forming the apex of the educational provision in the region.

2. The development of the integrated campus in Limerick has provided a valuable amenity and facility to the Limerick region and a centre for community activities and adult education for the region. Its availability as a modern conference centre is of direct benefit to the region.

3. There are a number of agencies, mainly statutory and semi-state bodies, involved in the promotion of regional development. These include local authorities, regional development organisations, industrial, economic and agricultural organisations, management and trade union bodies and other groups concerned with specific infrastructural sectors of the region. Through the representative regional membership of its Governing Body, the NIHE has established links with many of these development agencies. Furthermore staff members of the Institute by their membership of regional, professional and vocational bodies and agencies create a vital link with leaders of professional, industrial and political opinion within the region.

4. The research and consultancy capacity of the Institute has been applied to a number of spheres of regional activity. An interdisciplinary team has recently conducted a comprehensive study of Agricultural Resources in the region on the invitation of the Regional Development Organisation.

5. The Cooperative Education Programme of the Institute has generated an extensive network of contacts with a wide range of firms and industrial enterprises both in the region and beyond. This scheme under which students in their second and fourth years spend six months in employment in an enterprise related to their study speciality, is of mutual benefit to both the employers and the institute. For the student, it offers a valuable experience

which is remunerated by the employer and also provides an insight into the relationship of theory and practice. Some of the assignments of the Cooperative Education Programme and related careers are indicated in Table 3.21.

It offers an employer the possibility of employing young NIHE students who bring to their work new techniques and who can function with a minimum of supervision. Some employers find it of value to employ NIHE students on a cyclic basis to fill certain positions. Part of the relationship between the employer and the NIHE involves access to the information facilities and the consultancy and in-service training capacity of the Institute. The reports by the employers on student performance offers the Institute valuable feed-back on its programmes of study and an independent opinion on the calibre of the individual student.

While most of the Cooperative Education Programme assignments are Irish-based, several students have worked abroad in France, Germany, the U.K., Cananda and in Finland.

The extent and the nature of the interaction between the region and the NIHE in the early years have been constrained by the resources and personnel available to the infant Institution. The fact that NIHE has been able to initiate such a link from the beginning demonstrates its acceptance of an commitment to its regional function.

3.3. Possible Future Patterns of Interaction.

In considering possible patterns of interaction between NIHE and the Mid-West region it is desirable that the analysis be confined to those aspects of the socio-economic scenario of the region which are strategically critical and amenable to modification in the short term, i.e. to about the year 1990. One assumes that as the Higher Education Authority, recognises fully the regional function of the NIHE and the associated resource implications, that appropriate budgetary measures will be taken to support the crucial regional role of the institute.

In outlining a possible future pattern of mutual interaction between the region and the NIHE, one can identify the following general objectives:

A. The promotion of public regional consciousness and identity,
B. The systematic examination of the region's problems,
C. The direct prosecution of the economic, social and cultural welfare of the region.

The regional problems examined in this study are long-term and continuing problems and as such not amenable to any instant solutions. It is imperative that the elucidation of strategies designed to solve these problems be located within an institutional framework which is intimately indentified with the region and is in possession of the resources and personnel which will guarantee a continuity of commitment and the professional coordinated expertise which is required. 28

A. THE PROMOTION OF REGIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTITY:

Due to the historical emphasis on the county in the local government structure as the administrative unit, little progress has been made since 1963 in generating a public awareness of regional identity. The regional structures which were designated do not command any immediate existing loyalties. Three out of nine of the regions designated under the 1963 Act, encompass part of a county and in all of the regions, strong county affiliations impede the emergence of widespread identification with units which are composed of more than one county. In many of the regions there is a lack of information of regional acitvity, policies and problems. The Mid-West region, due to the catalytic influence of Shannon Airport and the physiographic unity generated by the Shannon estuary, may have a possible advantage over the other regions in the question of public awareness of regional identity. Nevertheless there is a major task of public education involved in broadening the limits of county affiliation to encompass a genuine attachment to the region as a unit and an awareness of the strategy for its development. In this programme of public education, the NIHE has a major role to play, which its potential both in personnel and facilities and its contacts with the schools and communities of the region render it eminently suited to fulfill. This programme of public education could include documentary programmes in the media, coordinated information campaigns in the regional press and vocational journals and school-based projects designed to disseminate knowledge and interest in the region among the rising generation. The NIHE could further this public awareness of regional identity by organising in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors of the region, seminars and short study courses

focussed on the region in conjunction with vocational and professional bodies.

B. THE SYSTEMATIC EXAMINATION OF THE REGION'S PROBLEMS.

In the Mid-West as in many of the other regions of the country there are various bodies deeply committed to the development of the region, whose numbers devote much time and energy to the sectoral aspects of development in which they are directly concerned. Much of this effort and motivation lacks thrust and cohesion because it is sectorally organised and consequently is less effective than if it were emanating coherently from one centre. The NIHE offers an ideal location in which to create such a policy centre for the study of the multiple facets of the region's development in a systematic coordinated manner. In the design and implementation of regional plans there is a complexity and iteration which require sensitive monitoring and continuous evaluation. It is further essential that regional development be promoted along lines which retain a balance between national developments and the specific characteristics of the region.

Such a Regional Policy Centre located in the NIHE would have the following functions;

1) to assemble, codify and publish comprehensive scientific data and information on the region,
2) to underake empirical studies of various sectoral aspects of the region,
3) to evaluate present regional policies and to conduct futurologic studies,
4) to cooperate with other centres in the systematic study of regional policy.

Such a Regional Policy Centry while carrying a strong research emphasis, would also participate in teaching at NIHE. The interdisciplinary nature of its activities would render it eminently suitable to contribute to a variety of study areas as well as to any new programmes developed in Regional Studies.

In the staffing of the Regional Policy Centre it would be essential to have a wide representation from a range of academic disciplines and administrative levels; the existing regional bodies could through their professional and administrative staffs, make a significant contribution, either on a permanent or rotational basis. There are other national bodies such as the IMI, the IPA, An Foras Forbartha, An Foras Talúntais and the Trade Unions which could contribute experienced personnel to such a Regional Policy Centre at NIHE.

Such a Policy Centre would generate coherent sectoral strategies and a systematic body of knowledge of the region, which would be available to the regional policy makers for whom the centre would also conduct specific studies. The promotion of cultural and historical studies would also form part of the Centre's remit. The Mid-West region with its rich cultural heritage and a strong historical tradition offers ample materials for valuable research and study especially in a period of rapid socio-cultural transition. The provision and development of a regional museum might offer a focal point for such regional and cultural studies; the inclusion of industrial archeology, in the museum's range of activities would protect and conserve items of interest from the economic past of the region and provide

valuable study material in a number of related fields.

The financing of such a Policy Centre at NIHE could be facilitated by substantial funding from the EEC Regional Fund, complemented by regional and national contributions. In its initial phase, its annual budget could be expected to fall within the range of £50,000 to £65,000, there being no additional capital costs involved in its establishment.

C. THE DIRECT PROSECUTION OF THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL WELFARE OF THE REGION.

In its present range of academic and community activities, the NIHE is contributing significantly to the economic and social welfare of the region. Given adequate resources, this contribution could be more directly focussed and applied strategically to selected aspects of the region's problems. This strategic contribution could be provided by the NIHE,

1) in its general educational provision,

2) in its provision for further education,

3) in its R & D service to industry and agriculture.

1. General Educational Provision.

As the apex of the educational provision in the region, NIHE is in a position to support and assist the various levels of the system towards improving the quality and extending the range of the education offered. As indicated in section 2.4. of this report second level education in the Mid-West region is provided in schools of which 60% have enrolments under 300 pupils and a

significant number have less than 150 pupils. School size, in a system in which funding is capitation-based, exerts a severe constraint on the subject range which is offered. Data from the Mid-West region (c.f. Table 2.45), indicates that many of the second level schools in the region do not provide Advanced Mathematics, Science and a Technical Subject at Leaving Certificate level. There is a similar inadequate provision of Modern Languages at the same level for boys and girls. These are the subjects which have a critical contributory importance in the economic development of the region; they are also the subjects the absence of which diminshes the educational opportunity available in small schools and the subsequent employment potential of rural children.

The NIHE in its facilities and personnel is well endowed in all of these subject areas. By means of a well designed Distance Learning system and utilising Independent Learning or Teacher Guided Learning in the cooperating schools, the NIHE and the schools could substantially extend the curricular range available. Such a system of low cost instructional techniques would have many other fields of application; its development in the Mid-West on a pilot basis could be of direct benefit to the other peripheral Atlantic regions where the schools of the sparsely populated areas suffer the same constricted curriculum.

NIHE could develop the capacity to provide this Distance Learning Unit either as part of or in conjunction with its own Educational Technology Unit. The Distance Learning System could be of immediate relevance to the Cooperative Education Programme at NIHE and also in extending the target range of its study programmes.

2. Further Education Provision.

As an element of regional development strategy, local cooperative effort at parish level is of crucial significance. Within the Mid-West region and especially in Co. Limerick there is a strong tradition of such community cooperative activity, deriving mainly from the popular movement "Muintir na Tíre (literally - "The Poeple of the Land"). The NIHE could in addition to its existing centralised evening courses for adults, engage in a region-wide campaign of extension and further education by means of such local groups. The planning skills, economic insights, and management expertise which small local cooperatives need could be provided by advisors and instructors of the NIHE. Such extension courses could adopt both formal and informal approaches, could be project-based and should attempt in particular to encourage entrepeneurial initiative. In the organisation of such extension programmes, NIHE should work in close harmony with the voluntary farmer and rural organisations and with the County Agricultural Committees. The availability of structured learning materials in various courses at a Learning Unit in NIHE would enable adults to have access to further education at a pace and at time compatible with their individual circumstances. Such a further education facility would emerge from the growth of the Distance Learning Unit referred to above and could provide at NIHE some initial elements of a regional plan for Permanent Education.

3. An R & D Service to Manufacturing and Service Industry in the Region.

As with post-primary schools, many of the firms operating in the region are small and consequently do not have available to them, the level of R & D services which larger firms find it possible to posses or purchase. In its industrial location policy the advisory services provided by SFADCO are of great importance; they include recruitment, training and labour relations. The development of component linkages between manufacturing firms, the availability of reliable general engineering services and the existence of some specialised facilities, have been identified as critical in the industrial development of the region. For many of the firms of the region market research may be an important need. The NIHE could by means of its expertise and facilities in Business Studies, Industrial and Materials Engineering and Administrative Systems offer a valuable service to the region's small industries. This service might include;

a) process or plant research,

b) product testing and technical evaluation,

c) market or sales research,

d) installation and environmental safety.

Such a policy of cooperation between regional industry and the NIHE should enable any industrialist to automatically seek the help of the services of the NIHE in relation to R & D aspects

of his enterprise. It would be possible to develop some aspects of this service by utilising the basic concept of the Cooperative Education Programme. In the agricultural sector, NIHE could in association with An Foras Talúntais, the farming organisation and the County Agricultural authorities provide some spcialist services in engineering and marketing and perhaps plant design.

In both industry and agriculture, in the region, the multiplicity of existing agencies might make it difficult for a new insitution to involve itself in an effective fashion. The availability of the resources of NIHE as a regional service should be seen not as an intrusion but as a valuable element of the region's developmental strategy. Its involvement with the total life of the regions should be construed as an illustration of its institutional motto - EAGNA CHUN GHNIMH - literally "Knowledge applied to Action."

In considering the relationship between the region and NIHE, it is necessary to stress that the interaction to be fruitful needs to be reciprocal. The institute needs the political and resource support of the region, the popular attachment deriving from utilisation and a complete recognition by the region's educational network, just as the region requires the expertise, the professional contribution and the varied services of the Institute. It is particularly critical that from its early stages of development, the NIHE be explicitly recognised in the region as the natural centre for higher education in all the fields of study provided by it.

Such essential support from the region was readily forthcoming in the early days of the NIHE, due to the energetic campaign waged over twenty years to secure a university in the area. It is important that this early enthusiasm be translated into continued practical support for the Institute to counteract any residual attachment to the University Colleges at Cork and Galway at which the region's students traditionally studied. In fostering such support, political leaders, school authorities and leaders of industry and the trade unions can play a central role in a variety of explicit ways.

In developing facilities and services, infant institutions like the NIHE are in severe competition with older institutions which have long established endowments and beneficiary contacts. The region could express its active support for the NIHE by presenting funds towards the provision of facilities or by the creation of endowed scholarships or research funds. More ambitious large scale benefactors might consider the question of student residential accommodation as a worthy long-term project.

3.4. Summary of Proposals contained in previous sections.

1. That the NIHE by a programme of public education participate in promoting a public awareness of regional identity.
2. That a Regional Policy Centre be established at NIHE on an interdisciplinary basis with staffing inputs from various national and regional agencies and institutions.

3. The establishment of a regional museum with might include materials on the industrial and economic archaelogy of the region.
4. That the NIHE organise a Distance Learning system which would extend the curricular range of the region's small second level schools and help provide programmes of further and adult education.
5. The provision of structured learning materials at NIHE to facilitate individual learning by all sectors of the community.
6. That NIHE organise and offer an R & D consultancy service to the small industries of the region.
7. That NIHE provide engineering and marketing consultancy services to the agricultural sector of the region's economy.
8. That the region actively support the NIHE.

4.0 Trends and potential in the Mid-West Region.

The movement towards regionalisation and autonomous units will probably gather momentum over the next two decades. It is possible that in local government, the transition from the county to the region as the administrative unit will occur more rapidly than the present institutional attachments at county level would seem to indicate. The Mid-West region has a certain advantage in that its physiography confers a natural unity on it by means of the lower reaches of the Shannon and its extensive estuary. The location of Limerick City at the head of the estuary makes the regional capital a natural focus even for parts of Clare and Tipperary.

The economy of the Mid-West in its present pattern contains an agricultural sector which is declining more rapidly than the industrial and service sectors are expanding. Agriculture in the region is beset by the small size of holding and by associated social, demographic and economic factors. The very high quality of the land in that part of the region forming the Golden Vale, is likely to ensure that the agricultural sector and the dependent food industry will survive as resilient elements of the region's economy. The development of more intensive methods in farming, the initiative shown by farming cooperatives in diversifying their activities and the growth of export markets should enable the agricultural sector to continue as a stable counterpart to the growing industrial sector in the region.

The recent emergence of part-time farming, the feasibility of commuting within the region and the good prospects in agriculture may help to stabilise the urban-rural population distribution at a higher percentage point than in any other region.

The industrial sector of the region's economy has shown a rapid expansion in the past two decades which has been impeded by the current recession. The planned development of the Shannon Estuary involving the introduction of heavy primary processing industries, would have a major effect on the region in terms of employment, the provision of services and supportive

infrastructure and the attraction of associated technology and industries.

The provision of higher education has been a central national policy issue since the mid-sixties. In Ireland, as elsewhere in Europe, demand for higher education has been cummulatively multiplied by virtue of the policies pursued at second level of widening access and extending cohort completion rates. As illustrated in Table 4.01 the percentage participation in full-time education at senior level has risen considerably over the last decade.

The policy response to the resultant increased demand for higher education has been to provide an extended scholarship scheme, to increase capacity and to diversify the institutional type at third level. The expansion in higher education of the past decade has been marked by an increasing emphasis on technological education. Studies in the early sixties had shown the academic imbalance in the output of the educational system and had demonstrated the projected needs of the economy for technicians and technologists.

The network of nine Regional Technical Colleges which was established in 1970 was given a specific brief to redress the manpower imbalance by educating for trade and industry and by contributing to regional development. The establishment at the same time of NIHE at Limerick was part of a general policy to create a coherent technological sector in

higher education, parallel to the existing academic sector. In this technological sector, the National Council for Educational Awards would act as a validation and certification body, awarding degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Thus by the early seventies, a national institutional network had emerged with a specific commitment to technological education, the individual elements of which were intended to have a positive influence on the development of productive enterprise in their respective regions. The establishment of a second NIHE at Dublin in 1975, completes this pattern of higher technological education.

Resulting from policy changes and prolonged ambiguity as to the degree awarding status of the NIHE and the NCEA, public confidence in the non-university sector of higher education may have been diminished. The present policy of a comprehensive structure, in which all the technological institutions are linked to universitities, will locate the degree awarding function solely within the universities. Within such a comprehensive system, in order to guard against the undue influence of the academic institutions, the technological institutions should seek to forge more coherent linkages among themselves. To this end the proposal that the Regional Technical Colleges would affiliate with the NIHE at Limerick would seem to be a reasonable suggestion. Taking this proposal one step further, and including the newly created Dublin NIHE, it would seem desirable and feasible that the two National Institutions and the regional technical colleges should develop a strong corporate connection with a view to evolving a formal structure

at an early date. The early experiences of relations between academic and technological institutions would seem to indicate its desirability; the essence of the comprehensive principle, i.e. equality of public esteem, would seem to demand it. The formal contacts alrady built up between the NIHE and the Regional Technical Colleges, augur well for the emergence of a later structural link. The National Institute and the Regional Colleges could form the nucleus of a National Technological University. Its geographical dispersal should not diminish its cohesion in the least; rather its regional presence should strengthen its effective contribution to social and economic development and the application of technology to regional problems.

The NIHE, either as an element of a larger unit or in its present position within an academic university, has a major role to play in the Mid-West region. Its role in the peripheral areas generally is also of potential importance. In its various contacts with the Regional Technical Colleges of the western regions, there lies a significant potential for regional contribution. In expanding its professional and service links with the Mid-West, the NIHE will develop skills and expertise which could be of direct relevance to the western R.T.C.'s and their respective regions. The creation of joint task groups or research teams might form the first step towards corporate affiliation and enhanced regional influence.

So that such long-term developments can materialise, it is essential that national policy on higher education be formulated with precision and associated with forward planning which covers a time span of at least twenty years. Only within such a framework of consistent policy and sequential planning can institutions such as NIHE function optimally and receive the resource and political support to enable them to discharge their regional functions adequately.

STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE 2.21. TOTAL POPULATION AND POPULATION CHANGES IN EACH OF THE COUNTIES OF THE REGION FOR SELECTED YEARS.

YEAR	CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.N.R.	REGION.
1961	73,702	133,339	53,696	260,737
1966	73,597	137,357	53,843	264,797
1971	75,008	140,459	54,337	269,804
% age change 1961/71	+ 1.8	+ 5.5	+ 1.2	+3.4

Source: Census of Population, Vol.1. 1966, 1961, and 1971.

Note: Tables are numbered according to the relevant sections of the report.

TABLE 2.22 RURAL POPULATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION IN THE COUNTIES OF THE REGION FOR 1961 and 1971.

COUNTY	1961	1971	% CHANGE
CLARE	80.9	74.0	- 6.9
LIMERICK	91.1	84.9	- 6.2
TIPP. N.R.	69.9	66.3	- 5.2
REGION	66.1	60.2	- 5.9

Note: The data on Limerick does not include Limerick County Borough.

SOURCE: Census of Population, Vol.3 for 1961 and 1971.

TABLE 2.23 DISPERSAL OF POPULATION BY SIZE OF TOWN IN THE MID-WEST REGION 1966.

TOWN SIZE	NUMBER OF TOWNS	% AGE POPULATION
over 5,000	3	22.0%
2,000-5,000	10	9.2%
1,000-2,000	7	2.7%
500-1,000	21	4.2%
250-500	30	3.1%
100-250	50	2.4%
ALL TOWNS	121	43.6%
RURAL AREAS	-	56.4%

SOURCE: McCarthy & Partners, Strategies for Regional Development, Vol.1. Dublin 1971.

Note: While the general pattern is similar, the data in the quoted study refers to a slightly larger area than the Mid-West.

TABLE 2.24 NUMBER OF TOWN IN THE MID-WEST REGION BY SIZE AND COUNTY.

SIZE	CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.N.R.	REGION.
Over 3,000	2	1	3	6
2,000-3,000	1	1	1	3
1,000-2,000	3	3	-	6
under 1,000	11	26	8	45
ALL SIZES.	17	34	12	60

SOURCE: Census of Population 1971.

TABLE 2.25 TOTAL POPULATION AND TOWN POPULATION IN 1971 AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN THE PERIOD 1966-1971.

AREA	TOTAL POP.	% IN TOWNS	CHANGE 1966-1971	
			TOTAL POP.	TOWN%
STATE	2,978,248	52.2%	+ 3.3%	+ 7.7%
MID-WEST	269,804	38.1%	+ 1.9%	+ 8.8%
WEST	258,748	23.5%	- 1.9%	+ 7.9%
EAST	1,062,220	84.0%	+ 7.4%	+ 7.9%

SOURCE: Census of Population, 1971, VOL.1.

TABLE 2.31 NUMBERS IN EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR AND NUMBERS UNEMPLOYED IN THE MID-WEST REGION FOR THE YEARS 1961 & 1971.

SECTOR	1	11	111	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYED
1961	44,173	17,686	32,257	94,116	4,500
1971	31,626	26,000	35,426	93,050	6,035

SOURCE: Commission of the European Communities Report on the Regional Problems in the Enlarged Community, 1973.

TABLE 2.32 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR AND BY COUNTY FOR THE YEARS 1961 & 1971.

SECTOR	1		11		111	
	1961	1971	1961	1971	1961	1971
CLARE	60%	44%	14%	25%	25%	30%
LIMERICK	57%	42%	14%	24%	28%	34%
TIPP.N.R.	51%	39%	19%	27%	29%	33%
REGION.	47%	34%	18%	28%	34%	38%
STATE	36%	26%	24%	30%	39%	43%

SOURCE: Report on the Regional Problems in the Enlarged Community, 1973. p.104.

TABLE 2.33 THE NUMBER OF FARMERS WITH HOLDINGS IN EXCESS OF VALUATION £100, AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMERS, BY COUNTY AND REGION, 1966.

COUNTY	NUMBER	%AGE
CLARE	181	1.9%
LIMERICK	611	6.9%
TIPP. N.R.	276	5.4%
REGION.	1,068	4.6%

SOURCE: Quoted in Hayhurst. R. Agricultural Resouces Survey, Mid-West Region, Limerick, 1976.

TABLE 2.34 THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE MID-WEST REGION BY COUNTY IN 1972 & 1976.

COUNTY	CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.N.R.	REGION.
1972	1,502	4,066	993	6,561
1976	2,168	6,033	1,872	10,073
72/76	+ 666	+ 1,967	+ 878	+ 3,512

SOURCE: Based on information supplied by SFADCO.

TABLE 2.35 THE NUMBERS IN VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE MID-WEST REGION BY COUNTY, 1976.

CATEGORY	CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.	REGION
FOOD.	208	2,582	1,635	4,425
DRINK AND TOBACCO.	9	96	120	225
TEXTILES.	1,169	117	288	1,574
CLOTHING.	287	177	116	580
TIMBER.	601	471	44	1,116
PRINTING & PUBLISHING.	100	298	65	463
CHEMICALS.	89	159	257	505
CEMENT & CONCRETE.	234	741	166	1,141
ENGINEERING - MECHANICAL.	1,118	3,079	235	4,432
ENGINEERING - ELECTIRCAL.	1,51[illegible]	412	66	1,991
MISCELLANEOUS.	801	69	87	957
TOTAL	6,129	10,201	3,079	17,409

SOURCE: Based on information supplied by SFADCO. 1976.

TABLE 2.41 THE NUMBER OF POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE REGION BY SEX OF ENROLMENT, BY TYPE AND BY COUNTY, 1976.

SCHOOL TYPE		CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.N.R.	REGION
SECONDARY -	BOYS	4	8	5	17
	GIRLS	4	10	7	21
	COED.	5	10	2	17
SECONDARY TOTAL		13	28	14	55
VOCATIONAL-	BOYS	1	2	-	3
	GIRLS	-	-	-	-
	COED.	7	12	6	25
VOCATIONAL TOTAL		8	14	6	28
COMPREHENSIVE.		1	1	-	2
COMMUNITY		-	1	-	1
ALL SCHOOLS		22	44	20	86

SOURCE: Data from an unpublished survey 1976 conducted by S. O'Buachalla and M. O'Regan.

TABLE 2.42 TOTAL STUDENT ENROLMENTS BY COUNTY IN THE POSTPRIMARY SCHOOLS OF THE MID-WEST BY SEX AND BY SCHOOL TYPE, 1976.

SCHOOL TYPE		TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	GIRLS AS % AGE
CLARE	SECONDARY	7,442	5,293	2,149	29%
	VOCATIONAL	1,612	956	656	41%
	COMPREHENSIVE.	535	275	260	49%
CLARE -	ALL	9,589	6,524	3,065	31%
LIMERICK	SECONDARY	15,658	10,563	5,095	32%
	VOCATIONAL	1,974	1,436	538	37%
	COMPREHENSIVE	669	623	46	7%
	COMMUNITY	282	204	78	28%
LIMERICK -	ALL	18,583	12,826	5,757	30%
TIPP.N.R.	SECONDARY	4,358	1,690	2,668	61%
	VOCATIONAL	1,633	1,069	564	34%
TIPP.N.R.	ALL	5,991	2,759	3,232	53%
REGION	ALL	34,163	22,109	12,054	35%

SOURCE: Liosta Iarbhunscoileanna Foillsithe ag an Roinn Oideachais, 1975/76. Published Data.

TABLE 2.43 DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL ENROLMENTS AND PERCENTAGE IN EACH TYPE OF SCHOOL BY COUNTY 1974/75

COUNTY	SECONDARY	VOCATIONAL	COMPREHENSIVE	COMMUNITY	TOTAL
CLARE	7,442	1,612	535	-	9,589
LIMERICK	15,658	1,974	669	282	18,583
TIPP.N.R.	4,358	1,635	-	-	5,991
REGION	27,458	5,219	1,204	282	34,163
% AGE	80.3%	15.2%	3.5%	1.%	100.%

SOURCE: Departmental statistics. 1974/75.

TABLE 2.44 SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF THE REGION BY COUNTY - 1974/75.

SIZE	CLARE	LIMERICK	TIPP.N.R.	TOTAL
0-149	6	11	3	20
150-299	11	22	6	39
300-399	1	3	8	12
400-499	0	4	2	6
500-599	2	1	1	4
600-699	2	2	-	4
700 +	-	1	-	1
ALL SIZES	22	44	20	86

SOURCE: Unpublished survey data. S. O'Buachalla and M. O'Regan.

TABLE 2.45 THE AVAILABILITY OF SPECIFIED SUBJECTS AT LEAVING CERTIFICATE LEVEL IN THE POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF COUNTIES CLARE AND LIMERICK IN THE 1974/75 SCHOOL YEAR.

COUNTY CLARE

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN WHICH SUBJECT IS AVAILABLE				
	HON. MATHS	ONE SC. SUBJECT	TWO SC. SUBJECT	ONE TECH. SUBJECT	ONE MOD. LANG.
CATERING FOR BOYS					
18	5	7	2	6	7
CATERING FOR GIRLS					
12	3	7	3	1	6

COUNTY LIMERICK

CATERING FOR BOYS					
34	9	13	8	4	11
CATERING FOR GIRLS					
34	6	12	7	-	12

SOURCE: Unpublished date from survey by S. O'Buachalla and M. O'Regan.

TABLE 2.46 THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF THE MID-WEST REGION AND THE RANGE OF COURSES ON OFFER, 1976.

INSTITUTION	DEGREE	DIPLOMA	CERTIFICATE
N.I.H.E.	X	X	-
Thomond College of Education.	X	X	-
Mary Immaculate College of Education.	X	X	-
Limerick Senior Technical Coll.	-	-	X

SOURCE: Department of Education.

TABLE 3.11 THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT NIHE BY PROGRAMME OF STUDY FOR THE YEARS 1972/1976.

PROGRAMME	1972/73	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
Administration Systems.	16	33	61	97
Business Studies	27	56	116	184
Electronics	26	40	82	145
European Studies	26	59	132	134
Engineering.	18	32	71	120
TOTAL	113	220	453	680

SOURCE: Information supplied by NIHE Limerick.

TABLE 3.12 THE NUMBER OF STAFF BY FUNCTION AT NIHE FOR THE YEARS 1972-1976

STAFF	1971/72	1972/73	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
ACADEMIC	17	33	44	60	60
ADMINISTRATION	-	18	27*	34*	34*
COMPUTER	-	-	2	2	2
LIBRARY	1	1	9	12	12
TECHNICIAN	-	5	18	20	20

Note; Those marked * include some posts common to NIHE and T.C.E.

SOURCE: Information supplied by NIHE Limerick.

TABLE 3.13 THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN YEAR 1 AT NIHE FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1975/76 BY COUNTY OF ORIGIN.

	CLARE	LIMERICK	REST OF COUNTRY	TOTAL
NUMBER	81	89	138	308
%	26%	28%	45%	100%

SOURCE: Information supplied by NIHE Limerick.

TABLE 3.14 THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED FOR YEAR 1 AT NIHE IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1975/76, BY PROGRAMME OF STUDY AND BY POST PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDED.

PROGRAMME	SECONDARY.	VOCATIONAL	COMPREHENSIVE	OTHER	TOTAL
ADMIN. SYSTEMS.	32	2	4	4	42
ELECTRONICS.	63	9	1	4	77
ENGINEERING.	38	13	4	5	60
EUROPEAN STUDIES.	35	2	2	6	45
BUSINESS STUDIES.	65	8	3	9	85
ALL	235	34	12	28	308
% AGE	76%	11%	4%	9%	100%

SOURCE: Information supplied by NIHE Limerick.

TABLE 3.21 SOME EXAMPLES OF WORK ASSIGNMENTS FROM THE COOPERATIVE WORK PROGRAMME CLASSIFIED BY PROGRAMME OF STUDY.

PROGRAMME	ASSIGNMENT	CAREER POSSIBILITY.
ADMIN. SYSTEMS.	PERSONNEL TRAINEE	PERSONNEL ADMIN.
	ADMIN. ASSISTANT	COMPANY SECRETARY.
	O & M ASSISTANT	O & M ANALYST.
BUSINESS STUDIES.	ACCOUNTS CLERK	ACCOUNTANCY.
	PURCHASING TRAINEE	MANAGEMENT.
	UNDERWRITER TRAINEE	INSURANCE.
EUROPEAN STUDIES.	TOURIST ADMIN.	TOURISM.
	TRANSLATION	INTERPRETER.
	PUBLIC SERVICE.	INTERNATIONAL SERVICE.
ELECTRONICS.	CIRCUIT DRAUGHTSMAN	RELIABILITY ENGINEER.
	CONTROL TECHNICIAN	PRODUCTION ENGINEER.
	SERVICE AIDE	INSTALLATION MANAGT.
ENGINEERING.	PILOT PLANT AIDE.	METALLURGICAL ENGINEER.
	WORK STUDY ASSISTANT.	COMPUTER PROGRAMMER.
	DRAUGHTSMAN	POLYMER TECHNOLOGIST.

SOURCE: NIHE. Brochure on the Cooperative Education Programme.

TABLE 4.01 PERCENTAGE PARTICIPATION IN FULL TIME EDUCATION AT SENIOR LEVEL BY AGE GROUP IN 1964 and 1974.

AGE	15	16	17	18	19	20
1964	51	37	25	15	8.8	6.6
1974	78	60	42	23	12.8	6.8

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Department of Education.

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Map 1 The Mid-West Region and other Regional Units.

Map 2 Institutions of Higher Education

IRELAND — MID-WEST REGION
TOWNS AND TRANSPORTATION NETWORK
BIRR
BORRISOKANE
ROSCREA
ENNISTYMON
Co. CLARE
ENNIS
NENAGH
KILLALOE
TEMPLEMORE
Co. TIPPERARY
SHANNON
KILRUSH
LIMERICK
THURLES
FOYNES
Co. LIMERICK
CASHEL
NEWCASTLE-WEST
TIPPERARY
ABBEYFEALE
KILMALLOCK

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE REPORT

County	: The unit of local authority.
I.D.A.	: The Industrial Development Authority - a state body responsible for promoting industrialisation.
S.F.A.D.C.O.	: The Shannon Free Airport Development Company, which has responsibility for industrialisation in the Mid-West.
H.E.A.	: The Higher Education Authority - a national body charged with the planning and management of higher education in the university sector.
N.C.E.A.	: The National Council for Educational Awards which is the validation and planning authority in technical education.
A.N.C.O.	: The Industrial Training Authority - a statutory body providing initial and in-service training.
Secondary Schools	: Postprimary schools, usually Church owned, which are state funded and provide a curriculum which is predominantly academic.
Vocational Schools	: Postprimary schools, which are funded and managed by local authorities and offer a wide range of courses, academic and vocational.
R.T.C.	: Regional Technical College - providing degree and sub-degree courses in the commercial, scientific and technological fields.
Leaving Certificate	: The national qualification attaching to the terminal courses of the senior cycle in post-primary schools - offering access to higher education.
Comprehensive School	: A postprimary school, funded by the state and managed on a joint state-church-local authority basis, which offers a wide curriculum embracing academic and vocational elements.
Community School	: A postprimary school, funded by the state and managed on a joint church-local authority basis which in many cases replaced existing smaller schools.

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